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LETTER DATED 17 JULY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KUWAIT TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government I should like to draw your attention to the failure by Iraq to abide by the terms of relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular those pertaining to the urgent humanitarian demand that Iraq immediately release under the auspices of the ICRC all Kuwaiti and third country nationals and arrange for the ICRC immediate access to all POWs and detainees. In this regard, I should like to convey the following:

First, there are around 1,890 Kuwaiti POWs and detainees still held by Iraq, in addition to 1,990 non-Kuwaiti POWs and detainees.

Second, a number of the above were detained at a restricted area in Baghdad, Al-Rahwaniya, near the International Airport. Others were detained at General Intelligence (Al-Mukhabarat) building in Al-Athimiya district in Baghdad.

Third, the ICRC confirmed our information on some locations of POWs and detainees, a matter which was brought to the attention of the members of the Council on 20 May 1991.

Fourth, POWs and detainees have recently been transferred to undisclosed locations. The ICRC have been denied information of, let alone access to, these new locations.

Fifth, since the cease-fire formally came into effect on 11 April 1991 only 68 POWs and detainees of different nationalities have been repatriated in five phases, on 15 and 25 May, 12 and 27 June and 14 July.

Sixth, it is noteworthy that before the cease-fire formally came into effect on 11 April 1991, Iraq had released through the ICRC 5,060 POWs and detainees of different nationalities. Around 1,498 more persons of different nationalities have escaped Iraq through various routes.

Seventh, Iraq includes those returned under family reunion in the total number of POWs and detainees thus inflating the number of repatriated POWs and detainees. To illustrate, 56 persons were released to Kuwaiti authorities on 14 July 1991, of which 53 persons qualified for family reunion, 2 were Kuwaiti POWs and the last was a Syrian detainee.

While bringing the above to your attention, Kuwait wishes to emphasize its deep concern at the fate of those still held by Iraq. Our concern is compounded due to the recent transfer of POWs and detainees to undisclosed locations. Lastly, the Iraqi pattern of release of POWs and detainees puts into question the credibility and motives of the regime vis-à-vis a humanitarian matter of no apparent strategic asset to it.

I should appreciate it if you would bring this letter to the immediate attention of the members of the Security Council, and arrange for its circulation as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad A. ABULHASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative